THE GIRL FROM DINGLEVILLE.

BY S. E. KISER.

"Oh, yes, Barton, I have a job for you," said the president of the —th national bank, as he glanced up from some papers to find that a good-looking, trim young man stood beside his desk. "Just read that telegram."

Barton took the piece of yellow paper and read:

"Dingleville, Kan., Nov. 8.—James C. Baldwin, President —th National Bank, Chicago: My daughter arrives Chicago 12:30 today, Rock Island, on way to New York. Please meet her at depot. See that she gets through all right.

"Alvin K. Spencer,

"President Dingleville National Bank."

"Well," asked the president when Barton handed back the telegram, "What do you think of it?"

"I don't quite understand," the younger man replied, "what I have to do with the matter."

"You're to go down to the station at 12:30 and meet the young lady."

"Oh."

"Perhaps I ought to explain, seeing that you've just come into the bank and may not know about these things, that we find it necessary to do a great many little odd jobs for our country customers in order to retain their good will, and, incidentally, to keep their business. We never lose anything by extending courtesies. We frequently buy railroad tickets and engage steamboat passage for country bankers and members of their families, and I've even known of country bankers who asked the officers of city banks to reserve theater tickets for them. This has grown in recent years to be a part of the banking business. Now I'm going to trust this young lady to your care during her stay here. You are to meet her when the train arrives and entertain her as long as she remains in Chicago. The bank will stand the expense and you must see that she has a good time."

When the 12:30 train arrived Barton stood inside the gates watching for a girl who might look as if she were the daughter of a Dingleville, Kan., banker. Presently a young woman with a trim figure, a jaunty hat and a set of becoming furs emerged, following a porter who staggered under a load of suit cases and boxes.

"That," Barton thought, "must be some prima donna on her way back to 'dear old New York.'"

When the porter had put down the suit cases and boxes the young woman took a stand beside them and looked around as if she expected somebody. Then Barton happened to see the word "Dingleville" on one of the suit cases, and a moment later he and Miss Spencer were on their way to the parcel-room. She explained that she expected to remain over until 8:30 p. m. and had no plans whatever concerning the manner in which the time should be occupied.

As she smiled at him when he suggested that it would be well to begin by eating, Barton was glad that he had been selected for the job in hand and wondered why he had hoped before she came that the girl from Dingleville would make her stay short.

They were partaking of blue points when Miss Spencer suddenly remarked:

"Do you know, I—I expected you were going to be a gray-haired old ma with a tall hat and one of those long, double-breasted coats."

"Why?" Barton asked. "Have you a preference for old men who wear tall hats?"

"No, but then it has always seemed to me that all bank presidents must be old and stoutish, and the pictures of them show that they generally have white mustaches."

"But I'm not a bank president."

"Father told me you were."

"Did your father mention me personally? I didn't know he had ever heard of me."

"What do you mean? Hasn't he been doing business with you for years?"

"Oh, I see. You thought the president of the —th national would look after you personally He happened to be very busy today—had a previous engagement I believe—and sent me to take his place. I hope you don't mind."

Miss Spencer's manner became frosty, and Barton half regretted that he had not permitted her to go on believing him to be a bank president. But she was apparently not a girl who was inclined to let foolish formalities keep her from having a good time, and before they had finished their soup she seemed to have recovered from the shock Barton had given her by confessing he was not a bank president.

"Do you often take the president's place?" she asked.

"No. I wish I might—on pay day, for instance. It would be a great help. This, to tell you the truth, is my first experience as the president's proxy."

"You act as if you were used to it. Pshaw! I don't see why father sent that foolish telegram, anyway. I could have taken care of myself without any help. But he had an idea, I suppose, that the president of your bank would take me out to his house and that I'd become acquainted with his family and be introduced to all their friends. I wish I had made arrangements to go east on the next train."

"You are very complimentary," said Barton, intending to be as sarcastic as possible. "Of course, I can't blame you for feeling resentful because the president of the —th national didn't drop everything else and give up the day to entertaining you. Perhaps he'd have done it if he had—"

"Had what?" she demanded, when he checked himself.

"Had known what you look like, if you insist."

Miss Spencer eyed him steadily for a moment and then said:

"This, as I understand it, is merely a part of your work. You are getting paid for looking after me, aren't you?"

"If you want to put it that way, I suppose I am. At all events, they're not docking me for being absent."

"It's just as if you had been sent out to buy bonds somewhere, or—or to look after a piece of property, on which your bank was to make a loan, isn't it?"

"Just the same. You see you are supposed to have influence with your father, and I'm here for the purpose of making you think well of the —th national, so that the present friendly relations between our bank and the Dingleville national may continue. Now we thoroughly understand the matter, don't we? Isn't there something else I can order? Wait a moment, Miss Spencer; I'm going to have the waiter bring you a nice big bunch of roses like those on the table over there by the window. The bank is paying for all this, you know."

"Thank you. But I suppose there is a limit beyond which you are not expected to go?"

"Oh, yes. I haven't any doubt that there would be objections if I were to take you around to some jewelry store and buy you a diamond necklace; but I'll tell you what I can do. Let's see—this is Wednesday, isn't it? How would you like to go to a matinee? After that we can have dinner together, and then it'll be time to put you on the train for New York."

"As you please. You are looking after me. It is your business to see that I have a good time. If I don't I shall of course have father open negotiations with some other bank here."

"I'm afraid I've done an unwise thing in explaining matters to you. You have us at a disadvantage now, and can demand almost anything you want."

"How splendid. Well, to begin with, I'm going to ask you to take me to one of your best stores here. I want a better umbrella than the one I have, and as long as the —th national is willing to pay I may as well get the best I can find."

Barton regarded this as a joke until she ordered him, as they were passing through State street, to stop the hansom in which they had started from the hotel to the theater. She led the way into one of the big department stores, and, having picked out a $12 umbrella, thought she would like to look at hats.

There was one for $38 that looked very becoming to her. But as far as that was concerned, she looked well in any of them.

"What do you suppose they'll say at the bank when the bill for this comes in?" she asked, looking sweetly up into Barton's bulging eyes.

"I don't know," he answered. "I'll probably not be there to hear it. I have an idea that my connection with the —th national is not going to be a long and honorable one."

Having ordered the hat sent to the address of her friend in New York, the girl from Dingleville said she was ready to go on to the matinee.

Barton sat through the performance as if he were doing so under protest. In his mind's eye he could see himself walking the streets in search of a job and being turned from doors where in former, happier days he had been cordially welcomed. At the same time, however, he was conscious of the fact that it would have made him very happy if in some way he could have arranged it to have the entertaining of Miss Kittie Spencer as a life job. He knew her name was Kittie because she had said that her mother's last words as the train left Dingleville were: "Now, Kittie, be sure to telegraph the minute you reach Chicago."

"And to think," said Kittie, "I forgot all about it. I think if it hand't been for you I'd have remembered it. I was so surprised not to be met by a dignified, gray-headed old gentleman that every other thought popped out of my head."

Itwas while they were having dinner very leisurely in the evening, that Barton, after furtively studying the beauty of her features, said:

"I suppose I'll lose my job in the bank on your account."

"Why? You have done your work very well. I'll write a note to the president, if you like, and tell him that I am thoroughly satisfied with the entertainment you provided."

"But the hat and umbrella you got will cause trouble. When the bill for them comes in—"

He checked himself suddenly and a look of relief passed over his face.

"What is it?" she asked.

"Nothing. It's all right, after all. I'm glad you got them." . . .

He had accompanied her into the car and they were waiting for the starting time to come when she asked:

"What was it that suddenly caused you to change your mind about that hat and umbrella?"

"Oh, it's all right. There won't be any trouble about them."

"But I insist on knowing what it was that made you quit worrying so suddenly."

"It had just occurrred to me that I could go around to-morrow and pay for them myself, so that the bill will not need to go to the bank."

"I sha'n't allow you to pay for such things for me. As long as it was a matter of business between my father and your bank I considered it perfectly fair. To have you pay for them would be an entirely different matter."

The conductor had called out "All aboard," and the train was moving.

"Kittie," said Barton, as she was urging him to hurry out of the car, "let me pay for them, and—and pay for everything that you are to have after this. Won't you?"

He had jumped off, and she stood in the vestibule waving a hand at him.

"Won't you?" he asked again, runinng along with the train.

"I'll think about it on my way to New York," she replied, "and write to you."

Then she kissed the tips of her fingers to him and Barton went home to look up Dingleville on the map.—Chicago Record-Herald.

L. & N. TIME TABLE.

TRAINS GOING NORTH.

No. 52—St. Louis Express, 9:41 a. m.
No. 54—St. L. Fast Mail, 10:20 p. m.
No. 92—C. & St. L. Lim., 6:00 a. m
No. 56—Hopkinsville Ac. 8:45 p. m.

TRAINS GOING SOUTH.

No. 51—St. L. Express 5:18 p. m.
No. 53—St. L. Fast Mail 6:00 a. m.
No. 93—C. & N. O. Lim. 11:50 p. m.
No. 55—Hopkinsville Ac. 6:40 a. m

No. 52 and 54 connect at St. Louis for points west.

No. 51 connects at Guthrie for Memphis Lu points as far south as Erin and for Louisvil Cincinnati and the East.

No. 53 and 55 make direct connection at Gut rie for Louisville, Cincinnati and all point north and east thereof. No. 53 and 55 also c nect for Memphis and way points.

No. 92 runs through to Chicago and will carry passengers to points South of Evansvi Also carries through sleepers to St. Louis.

No. 93, through sleepers to Atlanta, Mac Jacksonville, St. Augustine and Tampa, F Also Pullman sleepers to New Orleans. Co nects at Guthrie for points East and West. 93 will not carry local passengers for points No of Nashville, Tenn.

J. C. HOOE, Agt.